



KCMU Examines Medicaid's High Cost Populations

The **Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured (KCMU)** has released a new report, **Profiles of Medicaid's High Cost Populations**, which examines the role that Medicaid plays in addressing six populations with serious health needs resulting in high costs.

For each population profiled (preterm birth babies, foster care children, **individuals with spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries, individuals with mental illness, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities**, and people with Alzheimer's disease), the report describes the condition and the need for services and supports, as well as the role of Medicaid in meeting those needs.

Profiles of six real people with these conditions are included with descriptions of model programs or cutting edge practices designed to meet the health needs of these individuals. The new report highlights Medicaid's role in anchoring care for individuals with exceptional needs.

Among the report's conclusions:

- People who rely on Medicaid have complex, extensive, and specialized needs for acute medical care, as well as long-term services and supports.
- The Medicaid program is responsible for uniquely public needs such as ensuring that children receiving foster care receive the acute care and long-term services they need; providing life-saving coverage for young adults who experience serious injuries while uninsured, such as young adults who experience traumatic brain injuries; and providing a safety net for individuals and families who planned for their long-term services needs, but whose resources have been exhausted by the high costs of services.
- Medicaid coordinates acute and long-term care services, many of them not available elsewhere, in a way that makes it especially well suited to serving people with high costs and complex needs.
- Medicaid covers people who otherwise would be uninsurable because they already have long-term services needs.
- There are generally no other major public or private sector programs for comprehensively meeting the acute care and long-term services needs of the populations addressed in this report.

- More than half (52%) of Medicaid spending goes towards all the care (LTC and acute services) of beneficiaries who use long-term care services.

The report is available at:

<http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/7565ES.pdf>.

Medicaid and Long-Term Care: Recent Publications Illuminate Key Policy Issues

With recent policy debates about the future of Medicaid, the Kaiser Commission has also created a **resource page of recent publications that address key policy issues** when examining Medicaid's role for high cost populations and in long-term care.

For more information:

<http://www.kff.org/medicaid/medicaidlongtermcare.cfm>



This information was compiled by MHRH staff Sue Babin.